

Letter from Orlando Gray to Juliana Reynolds, November 29, 1861

Army of the Potomac

Heintzelmans Division

Jamisons [Jamesons] Brigade

105 Regiment Penn. Volunteers.

Camp Jameson

Friday Evening Nov 29th 1861

Dear Sister,

Yours of the 22nd was received to day. It was gladly received for it brought us the good news that all was well at home. Your letter also found Tilton and my self in good health but not so with our camp generally for at present we have a good many on the Sick list. I have nothing very new or interesting to communicate that has transpired since my last letter. We are Still waiting anxiously to hear whether we are to make an advance or whether we will go into winter quarters where we are. But we get no information on the subject at all. For the last week everything has been as calm along the Potomack as though there was no Army here at all And Whether it is the calm that preceeds a storm or whether the Army is going into winter quarters I am unable to say. But Another week I think will decide the question one way or an other. I see by the tone of your letter that you begin to have Some confidence in the success of our troops in putting down this rebellion. For my part I never had any doubt about the entire success of our Army. I think it is only a matter of time. It will

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most certainly cost a large amount of money and probably a large number of valuable lives but the entire success I think is beyond a doubt.

In your letter you speak of our Col not using some of our Officers very well and of their being considerable dissatisfaction among the officers generally. Now I could say a good deal on this subject but will not in this letter and I don't know that I shall in any other for I do not wish to waste my time in writing nor have you waste your time in reading about matters which would be full as well if they were never mentioned. But for your special benefit I will endeavor to explain the condition of Affairs so that you can get a little insight into how these complaints arose. You say that you think our Col did not do justice to our Second Lt. Now if you were a military man instead of a kind hearted and patriotic woman I would think you were capable of judging whether our Col was capable of [?] the affairs of a regiment or not. But you being the latter and not the former I should ask you to defer your judgement at least until you hear All Sides of the question.

In the first place I think that the gentleman who complains owes his present condition in the Army to the very one that he now blames for not promoting him. But more than this there is no sense in the Complaint he makes from the fact that the position he wished to fill has never been made vacant only for the time being. Consequently if I were to resign my position on the Staff I would then resume my position in the company and it would make no difference who filled it they would have to leave more than this. Our Col professes to be a pretty good judge of military men and can tell as far as he can see a man walk or hear him speak whether he can command men or not and he is also determined that his man shall have as good men for officers as the regiment will offer. And there is at present several vacancies to fill and if our friend who has been treated so badly and who is so anxious to be promoted possesses the requisite qualifications I think there would be no trouble in getting a higher position.

I may refer to this subject again but will close for the present and must also close this letter for it is getting very late and a little chilly. I have never wrote you much about our officers

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and men but will if I have time give you a general description of them. I sent two likenesses to day one to you and one to Emiline. I hope they may [?] for I had a good deal of trouble to get them. Good night dear sister.

O Gray